

# THE MARQUEE

ACT 1

SCENE 1

FEBRUARY 1975

The NEWSLETTER of the ASSOCIATION of KANSAS THEATRE

## WHAT IS AKT?

The Association of Kansas Theatre is a statewide organization which unites people interested in all types of theatre "to promote the highest calibre of theatre production, teaching and research at all levels of theatre within the state of Kansas." The Association is organized around seven Divisions, representing various categories of interested members: Children's Theatre, College and University Theatre, Community College Theatre, Community Theatre, Professional Theatre, Religious, Recreation and Army Theatre, and Secondary School Theatre. AKT is governed ultimately by its membership, through a twelve-member Executive Committee consisting of the seven Division Chairpersons, and the Officers elected at-large. AKT is an affiliate of the American Theatre Association.

Your state theatre association is barely a year old. It grew out of a need for better channels of communication among theatre artists, sponsors and patrons in Kansas—a need which this newsletter hopes to help satisfy in the near future. It grew out of that feeling we all have deep within us that help is just around the corner if we can just get organized and pull for it together: help in finding new ways to reach the audience we know is "out there waiting to be told"; help in finding out how to cut scenery costs without sacrificing quality or adding to construction time; help in finding that qualified director, designer, or technician to assist our overworked drama coach; help in locating those professional acting jobs in Kansas, so qualified young theatre artists don't have to leave the state or give up their careers; help in finding a producer for that new script; help in seeking aid for that guest artist . . . .

Can AKT do all that? Conceivably, yes, with a substantial membership of active, concerned theatre folk who are willing to see it done. If the Association of Kansas Theatre is to speak for our art on a statewide level, we must all become actively involved in its programs and development.

Scan this issue of **The Marquee** and see for yourself what some of those programs are. The Association of Kansas Theatre invites you to get in on the ground floor. Join, and contribute your own ideas as grist for the mill. The future of theatre in Kansas is your future, and the future of Kansas herself.

## FIRST ANNUAL CONFERENCE PLANNED IN TOPEKA

AKT's First Annual Conference and Business Meeting promises something for everyone. The meeting will be held Friday and Saturday, April 18 and 19, in Topeka. The Association of Community Arts Councils of Kansas (ACACK) is meeting there at the same time for its Annual Convention, and has invited us to share in some of its planned activities. The Kansas Association for Religious Communities, the Arts, and the American Revolution (KARCAAR), has recently voted to hold its convention concurrently with ours, and will center its activities in the Holiday Inn. The mid-April weekend should see Kansas' most involved artists and producers converging on the capital.

In addition to the Association's business meeting, the conference program includes lectures, demonstrations, workshops and symposia on such varied subjects as Fund Raising, The Relationship of the Arts to the Business Community, Publicity, Auditioning, Scene Painting, High School Competitions, Stage Lighting, Improvisation, The Uses of Plastics for the Stage, Playwriting, and Make-up. Professional theatres in the state, including Continental Theatre Company and Music Theatre of Wichita will hold statewide auditions as part of the conference. Four separate full-length productions have been scheduled as part of the conference agenda—some at no charge to convention registrants—with others available nearby. One of the productions will be the winner of the statewide competition of the Festival of American Community Theatre.

Registration fees for the conference are \$5.00 for each individual member, \$3.00 for each student member (this registration fee should not be confused with membership dues). Organizational members of AKT are entitled to a complimentary convention registration for one person, to act as that organization's representative.

## GET INTO THE AKT!

If you have news you'd like to see on **THE MARQUEE**, send it to:

Editor  
**THE MARQUEE**  
317 Murphy Hall  
The University of Kansas  
Lawrence, Kansas 66045

## ON-GOING PROGRAM IDEAS ENCOURAGED

The Annual Meeting in April will devote considerable time to exploring possible on-going activities and services for AKT. Some of the ideas already received are:

1. Find ways to encourage uses of drama in church;
2. Schedule a festival of original plays; find ways to encourage playwrighting;
3. Establish a talent pool or clearing house to facilitate assigning directors, designers or managers to high schools, community theatres, churches and recreation centers;
4. Establish continuing liaison between theatre groups which tour and give workshops and demonstrations and the people who seek those services;
5. Establish a regular forum for the exchange of ideas and production information, keeping everyone up to date (this newsletter, for example);
6. Find ways to avoid duplicating the programs and services of other organizations—and thus avoid wasting everyone's time and money;
7. Find ways to encourage theatre by and for the blind;
8. Encourage improved qualifications for teacher certification in theatre;
9. Find ways to help beginning groups get started with theatre and drama programs of all kinds;
10. Establish liaison between training institutions and employers of professional talent.

## KANSAS COMMUNITY THEATRE CONFERENCE JOINS AKT

The Kansas Community Theatre Conference voted last month to join the Association of Kansas Theatres as an organization, merging their dues structure with ours for the time being. The Pro-Tem Executive Committee agreed that KCTC represents a significant interest group of current and potential members, and decided that KCTC is the equivalent to the Community Theatre Division of AKT. KCTC President Nelson Stump is Community Theatre Chairperson on the Pro-Tem Executive Committee of AKT. AKT welcomes KCTC!

## PROFESSIONAL THEATRE DIVISION COMPILING ROSTER

The Professional Theatre Division of AKT is busy compiling a list of professional theatres active in the state. (There are more than you'd think!) If your group has not been contacted, drop a line to:

DR. WESLEY VAN TASSELL, Chairperson  
Professional Theatre Division, AKT  
c/o Continental Theatre Company  
Century II  
Wichita, Kansas 67202

The Professional Theatre Division is sponsoring auditions at the Spring Annual Meeting, so write soon.

## KANSAS COLLEGES REGISTER TEN PRODUCTIONS IN A.C.T.F.

The colleges and universities of Kansas put four original plays and six from the standard repertoire on the line in this year's Central States Regional competition of the American College Theatre Festival. The A.C.T.F. is in its seventh year. Colleges and universities compete in regional screenings in each of the thirteen regions. Four or five of the best productions in each region are selected to be presented at a central location in that region. A panel of national judges attends the regional festivals in all thirteen regions, finally selecting ten plays from around the United States to be presented at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington. At least one of the ten finalists will be a new script.

The originals entered this year by Kansas Schools were: **Amana**, by Mary Nichols (K-State, Manhattan); **Walterworld**, by Stephen Biddle (Ottawa U.); **Pepsi Threnodies**, by Eric Anderson (K.U., Lawrence); and, **A Song Called Home**, by J. Paul Porter (Wichita State). Entries in the Regular Competition were: **The Trojan Women** (Baker U., Ottawa); **The Creation of the World and Other Business** (Kansas State College at Pittsburg); **Joe Egg** (K-State, Manhattan); **Godspell** (K.U., Lawrence); **Effects of Gamma Rays on Man-in-the-Moon Marigolds** (Washburn U., Topeka); and, **Cat on a Hot Tin Roof** (Wichita State).

K.U.'s **Pepsi Threnodies** and **Godspell** both proceeded to the Regional Festival, February 4-8, sponsored by the St. Louis Junior College District.

## KCTC TO SPONSOR STATEWIDE FESTIVAL OF AMERICAN COMMUNITY THEATRE

The Kansas Community Theatre Conference will sponsor a Kansas-wide play competition for community theatres in McPherson on April 12. The event will be held in Brown Auditorium on the McPherson College Campus from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. An informal cocktail hour will follow.

The winner of this competition will present its selection at the spring conference of the Association of Kansas Theatre, April 19 in Topeka. The winner will also be eligible to enter the regional F.A.C.T. in Omaha this May. The winner of the regionals will then compete on the national level in Oklahoma City in June.

Applications for the festival are still being accepted. Interested theatres should write to:

NELSON STUMP, President  
Kansas Community Theatre Conference  
P.O. Box 685  
Salina, Kansas 67401

Entries must limit their presentation to one hour, must use simple stage properties (no constructed set), and should use a play or a cutting from a play by an American playwright.

## KARCAAR MAKES BICENTENNIAL PLANS

The Kansas Association of Religious Communities, the Arts and the American Revolution, the state branch of a national organization which sprouted last year in St. Paul, is seeking ways to unite religious communities and arts groups in a celebration of the American experience for the bicentennial. The Kansas group is one of several state and regional groups dedicated to the idea of religious communities contributing time, talent and money to the bicentennial effort.

Having begun primarily with the bicentennial in mind, KARCAAR quickly evolved into a group which seeks support for all the arts from religious organizations. KARCAAR, in addition to the meeting which it will hold in conjunction with AKT in Topeka this April, is planning a state-wide festival in Wichita a month later. The festival will feature important artists and religious leaders, displays and productions to energize religious communities for the arts. KARCAAR hopes to develop a touring group or a travelling arts project to visit religious organizations around the state, emphasizing the relevance of art to religion.

## SLATE PROPOSED FOR PRESIDENT-ELECT

The Nominations Committee has proposed the following slate of nominees for President-Elect:

Norman Fedder, Manhattan  
(Religious, Recreation & Army)  
Nelson Stump, Salina  
(Community Theatre)

The election will be conducted shortly by mail ballot. The person elected will be installed in office during the annual business meeting in Topeka in April. He will serve until the 1977 annual business meeting, when he shall, according to AKT's constitution, accede to the presidency for a term of two years. Jim Kriley of Emporia (College & University) will become AKT's new president at the April meeting.

## DID YOU KNOW?

... That there is a Drama Advisory Panel of the Kansas Arts Commission which screens grant proposals. This group, according to KAC's John Reed, would welcome input from AKT. The panel consists of five of our respected colleagues from around the state. Its purpose is to help identify quality undertakings. Similar panels exist in the other arts served by KAC.

## Seen enough to pique your interest? Want to see more?

Members of AKT receive every issue of this newsletter as one of the benefits of membership. In these early days of AKT your voice is important in shaping our goals. Put your energies and imagination to work and help us shape a better future for Kansas.

Organizational Membership ----- \$15.00  
Regular Membership ----- 5.00  
Student Membership ----- 3.00

All memberships run from January 1 to January 1.

Clip the coupon at the right and mail it with your check to:

### Treasurer

Association of Kansas Theatre  
317 Murphy Hall  
The University of Kansas  
Lawrence, Kansas 66045

Don't forget to indicate which divisional affiliation you prefer.

## A WORD ABOUT AKT'S STRUCTURE

The Association of Kansas Theatre is structured around seven distinct interest groups, each of which furnishes a Division Chairperson to sit on the Executive Committee. When a member joins AKT, he indicates his or her preference as to divisional affiliation. A substantial portion of his or her dues is then budgeted to the divisional organization he has chosen. When AKT was formed, the steering committee tried to make use of a number of existing organizations to provide input and avoid duplication. Many of our respected colleagues have served actively when called upon to offer advice and guidance. When the old "Steering Committee" dissolved itself last October in favor of a more constitutional "Pro-Tem Executive Committee," a number of officers from other groups agreed to serve. The Pro-Tem Executive Committee consists of the following:

President—Jed H. Davis, Lawrence  
President-Elect—James Kriley, Emporia  
Executive Sec./Treas.—Preston Sisk, Lawrence

### Division Chairpersons:

Children's Theatre—James Nicol, Kansas City  
College & University—Lloyd Frerer, Hays  
Community College—George Mastick, Chanute  
Community Theatre—Nelson Stump, Salina  
Professional Theatre—Wesley Van Tassel, Wichita  
Religious, Recreation &  
Army Theatres—Norman Fedder, Manhattan  
Secondary School—Eldon Evans, Shawnee Mission

### At-Large Members:

Terryl Asla, Lawrence  
Sr. Mary Dolorita Flynn, Leavenworth

The At-Large positions on the Pro-Tem Executive Committee were created by the Steering Committee to provide some continuity of leadership.

## STUDENTS TO ORGANIZE AT TOPEKA

AKT is anxious to have an active student voice in its deliberations. An amendment to AKT's constitution is presently being drawn up to allow for a permanent student seat on the executive committee. There will be representatives in Topeka from the American Theatre Student League, the student wing of the American Theatre Association, to talk about the benefits of membership in ATA and AKT. AKT encourages students to attend the Topeka Conference, and to participate actively in their professional organization.

## A.K.T. MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name -----

Address -----

City ----- State ----- Zip -----

Institution -----

Divisional Affiliation -----

Enclosed is my check or money order for \$-----

for (check one): ----- Organizational ----- Regular

----- Student Membership Dues through January 1, 1976.

# COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES TO COMPRISE SEPARATE DIVISION OF AKT

While AKT's structure is primarily patterned after that of ATA, there are several significant differences. One of the most readily apparent is the creation of a separate division for Community and Junior College Theatre in Kansas. This difference is due in part to the eloquent advocacy of George Mastick of Neosho County Community Junior College in Chanute. George was present at the original "run it up the flagpole" meeting at the 1974 American College Theatre Festival regional finals in Lawrence last year, and has followed through with AKT since then, serving on the steering committee and now on the Executive Committee Pro-Tem. His argument for a separate division was based on the sort of "limbo" in which the eighteen Community and Junior Colleges in Kansas exist. Generally speaking, they have as few or fewer staff members as most high schools in the state, yet are required to produce on a college level. Frequently they make use of community actors, directors, designers or technicians in their plays. Most CJC's have ambitious production schedules which, in light of the staffing situation, can cause problems which, if not totally different in kind from those of the college or university program, are certainly more acute.

There is fine communication among most of the CJC Theatre and Drama Instructors within the state, and Kansas could well be pioneering a more widespread effort to recognize community and junior colleges' unique problems on a regional or national scale.

## CHILDREN'S THEATRE FOLKS BOAST STRONG REGIONAL CONFERENCE

Anyone who has worked in Children's Theatre in Kansas knows what MINK is; it is the four-state regional children's theatre conference. The four states, Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska and Kansas, do not comprise the whole ATA Region V, but several years ago when ATA re-organized into its present regional structure, CT folks in the old MINK region were reluctant to give up a tried-and-true organization that had worked so well. So MINK is still going strong, and the Kansas contingent, chaired this year by Jim Nicol of Tomahawk Community Theatre in Kansas City, forms the basis for the Children's Theatre Division of AKT.

### The Seven Divisions of AKT

- CT ----- Children's Theatre
- UC ----- College and University Theatre
- CC ----- Community and Junior College Theatre
- AC ----- Community Theatre
- PT ----- Professional Theatre
- RA ----- Religious, Recreation and Army Theatre
- SS ----- Secondary School Theatre

Association of Kansas Theatre  
317 Murphy Hall  
The University of Kansas  
Lawrence, Kansas 66045